

Washington, DC – In response to news reports that radioactive waste has been found in Indian Point sewer pipes that connect to the Buchanan sewage system, U.S. Representatives Eliot Engel (D-NY17), John Hall (D-NY19), Maurice Hinchey (D-NY22), Nita Lowey (D-NY18), and Christopher Shays (R-CT04) today called on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to investigate and remedy this potential health and environmental disaster. “We write, yet again, to ask for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to investigate radioactive leaks emanating from the Indian Point Energy Center (IPEC),” the legislators wrote in a letter to EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. Radioactive tritium and cancer-causing strontium-90 have been leaking out of Indian Point for almost two years. Congressman Engel and his fellow legislators have requested that the EPA intervene on at least 5 previous occasions.

The letter went on to state that “people living near the power plant may have already been exposed to dangerous materials” and that given “the EPA’s mission to protect the environment and public health, it is essential that the agency immediately investigate this danger and determine the extent of the contamination and the potential health impacts of these leaks. Further delay is not an option.”

Since January Indian Point has suffered a split fuel pin detection, an unusual event due to a transformer fire, and four unplanned shutdowns and recently the NRC proposed to fine Entergy \$130,000 for missing its second deadline to install a working siren system.

“When radioactive materials find their way into a sewer system it is time for the EPA to step in,” said Engel. “For two years these materials have been leaking from Indian Point and for two years we have called for action. It is time for the jurisdictional games to end and for the EPA come in and protect the public.”

“The EPA’s core responsibility is to protect our environment and safeguard public health from pollution,” said Hall. “The ongoing leakage of radioactive, carcinogenic material from Indian Point creates a clear environmental hazard, and I am very concerned that the EPA has continued to rely on bureaucratic excuses instead of fulfilling its responsibilities. The discovery of tritium in Buchanan’s sewer system is a clear, undeniable call for EPA to take action.”

“The Environmental Protection Agency must live up to its name and protect the public from radioactive material leaking from Indian Point,” Hinchey said. “As we work to have the Nuclear Regulatory Commission conduct an Independent Safety Assessment to address all of Indian Point’s many problems, the EPA must take steps to protect public health from what is clearly a poorly managed facility. We’ve asked the EPA to get involved in the past and we don’t want to have to ask again.”

“This is the latest in a long line of safety and operational malfunctions at Indian Point,” Lowey said. “Local residents deserve assurance that everything possible is being done to secure this facility. The EPA should immediately address and remedy this potential disaster before it gets worse. I again call on the NRC to take action to ensure the safety of our communities and perform an ISA at Indian Point.”

“This raises serious concerns about the safety of the Indian Point facility,” said Shays. “We

have a responsibility to investigate this matter and determine any potential repercussions to both those living in the immediate area and to our overall environment."

Hall introduced legislation earlier this year, co-sponsored by Hinchey, Lowey, Engel and Shays, which would require the NRC to oversee an in-depth independent inspection at Indian Point. Hall's bill, H.R. 994, would also mandate that the plant comply with the Independent Safety Assessment recommendations or be denied a license extension in 2013.

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The full text of the letter to Administrator Johnson follows:

May 10, 2007

Stephen L. Johnson

Administrator

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Ariel Rios Building

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20460 Dear Mr. Johnson: We write, yet again, to ask for the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to investigate radioactive leaks emanating from the Indian Point Energy Center (IPEC). According to a news report in yesterday's Journal News, tritium has been found in sewer pipes that lead from Indian Point to the Buchanan sewage system.

This development means that people living near the power plant may have already been exposed to dangerous materials. Given the EPA's mission to protect the environment and public health, it is essential that the agency immediately investigate this danger and determine the extent of the contamination and the potential health impacts of these leaks. Further delay is not an option.

As you know, on March 3, 2006, Congressman Eliot Engel, Congresswoman Nita Lowey, and Congressman Maurice Hinchey sent you a letter requesting the Environmental Protection Agency investigate and correct the myriad of health, environmental and safety concerns at the IPEC, including radioactive leaks discovered at the power plant. Congressman Engel followed up on this letter by speaking to you about the matter again by telephone on January 27 of this year. He then sent you a letter on the same subject dated February 5, 2007, and he urged the EPA to investigate radioactive leaks at the IPEC yet again during two subsequent meetings with the Regional EPA Administrator. In response to all these requests, the EPA has claimed that the NRC has sole jurisdiction and has not acted. This is unacceptable

You must also be aware we are deeply concerned by the general operational safety record of the IPEC. Time and time again, the IPEC has had safety and environmental failures and time and time again the NRC has done next to nothing to address these problems. Now that we might be in the midst of an environmental and health disaster we need the EPA to fulfill its mission and respond to our request to thoroughly investigate and remedy this situation.

We look forward to your written response to this request. Sincerely,